GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2508
ANSWERED ON:19.03.2002
ROLE OF PANCHAYATS IN PRIMARY EDUCATION
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Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the name of States where Panchayats have played thin role in primary education in rural areas;

(b) whether any study has been conducted by Participating Research in Asia (PRIA) in this regard;

(c) if so, the details of the findings; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (PROF. RITA VERMA)

(a): The National Policy on Education, 1986 and the Programme ofAction (POA),1992 have emphasized the importance of decentralizing planning and management of education at all levels and involving people in the process. In accordance with the POA,a Committee on Decentralised Managementof Education was constituted to formulate guidelines for the management of education at district, sub-district, and village levels keeping in view the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution of India. This Committee had indicated how educational structures should be set up at the district, block/taluk levels in pursuance of the Constitutional Amendments. It had also suggested ways for mobilizing community participation in the educational process so that the country could move with a renewed vigour towards the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education. The report was commended for appropriate adoption and effective implementation by the States and UTs keeping in view the specific situations as well as the spirit of the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution of India.

(b) and (c): Participating Research in Asia (PRIA) have madea study on Devolution of Primary Formal Education to Panchayats in 14 States, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa,Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Sikkim, Uttar Pradesh, Uttranchal and West Bengal. The major findings of the study are given below:

(i) Overlapping of functions devolved to various tiers of Panchayats.

(ii) Non receipt of official communication from State Governments regarding transfer of powers to Panchayats.

(iii) Nominal roles given to Panchayats with regard to teachers.

(iv) Few States have transferred staff required for Panchayats to discharge their functions.

(v) Inadequate devolution of financial powers

(d): The Ministry has been urging the States/UTs to take appropriate action on the Report of the Committee on Decentralised Management of Education. The new programme of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan for universalisation of elementary education also emphasizes decentralized community based planning and implementation.